

Defensive Driving

The Police Department responds to motor vehicle accidents that are reported on private property and the public roads. During the course of the investigation officers find that similar factors seem to occur in accidents. A driver, practicing some basic preventive driving techniques can reduce the possibility of being involved in an accident. The following are just a few suggestions that if practiced, might prevent a collision.

1. Following too closely; follow the 3 second rule. That is to find a fixed object, watch the car ahead of you pass the object and then count 3 seconds. If you have reached the object before completing your count, you are following too closely.

2. Look left, right, left; at an intersection you are most likely to be struck on the left side, so look left, right, and then left again to ensure the path is clear.

3. Anticipate a traffic signal change; when approaching a traffic control signal (red light) anticipate the light will change. A driver should be decreasing their speed as they approach the signal in order to stop should the signal change. At the same time focus on what is ahead of you down the road and anticipate another driver's actions. A yellow signal means prepare to stop as the signal is changing, not speed up and try to beat the signal change.

4. Look before backing; a vehicle should not be moving in the reverse unless the driver has a clear view and is looking for oncoming vehicles.

5. Travel at the proper speed. The speed in a parking lot is not the speed limit on the street. Anticipate cars backing and pedestrians in parking aisles and coming from between vehicles.

6. Pay attention to your driving. Do not let distractions (cell-phones, stereos, passengers, or inattention) contribute to a motor vehicle accident. Texting and driving do not mix and are major distractions for drivers. Always look where you are going, not where you have already been. In short, look beyond the hood of the car and be aware of vehicles ahead of you, approaching you, or approaching from the side.

Practicing some basic defensive driving techniques may prevent an accident. We, as a City, are on track for less accidents than last year. Let us all do our part to continue the trend and prevent property damage and personal injury. Any questions about this or other programs or functions of the Police Department may be addressed to me at pblackwell@tullahomatan.gov or (931) 455-0530.